



# MAGICURRENTS

SAN DIEGO RING 76

FEBRUARY 2015

VOL. XXIX #2

## President's Message

### We are here for you.

Due to recent events, I find it necessary to write the following:

The Board and I want all members and their guest to feel comfortable and at ease when attending any of our meetings. If any of our members find reason to feel otherwise or have concerns that need to be addressed, rest assured that WE WILL handle the issue. Your Ring is soon to be given The I.B.M.'s Honor Ring Award in recognition of it being an example of a Ring which adheres to the high standards set by the international organization. We want to assure that we deserve — and continue to qualify for — the designation.

For those very few members who need to be reminded, Ring 76 is not a night club/bar. It is a private club with a "Family Friendly" environment.

As such, Ring 76 will not tolerate the following:

- Lewd comments/behavior
- Heckling.
- Insults/jokes offensive to another person.
- Mistreatment of another member or guest.
- Violence or threat of violence
- Discrimination for any reason, e.g., race, religion, disability, social status, etc.

Such conduct may lead to a member's expulsion from Ring 76 under Article VIII of our By-Laws.



I would also like to call your attention to the fact that we are projecting a financial deficit this year and the Board is looking into solutions that will allow us to continue to provide the benefits which members currently enjoy. If you have any comments or suggestions, please contact any member of the Board.

Thanks to the many members who put the effort in to make Ring 76 a fun and inviting environment.

Salomon Barajas  
President of Ring 76 - IBM

## Ring 76 2015 Calendar

Feb	9	Close-up Competition
Mar	9	Ice-Breakers & Business Cards*
Apr	12	Daryl Lecture
Apr	13	Teach-A-Trick
May	11	Stand-up Competition
Jun	8	Kids Magic
Jul	TBD	Installation Banquet
Aug	10	Classic Magic

\*Opportunity for Members to Perform

***San Diego Ring 76 meets the second Monday of the month at the Clairemont Senior Center, 4425 Bannock Ave, San Diego, CA 92117 at 7pm***

Our **next regular meeting** will be on **February 9 at 7:00 pm** and will feature our annual Close-up Competition which is part of the process to select our Magician of the Year. Please see the details on Page 10.

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HONEST SID GERHART RING 76

EDITOR AND PUBLISHER - MALCOLM CAMPBELL, EDITOR@RING76.COM



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## January 12, 2015 Ring 76 Meeting minutes

The meeting was called to order by President Salomon Barajas at 7:00 pm.

Two visitors, Nick Gentry and Bhavika Joshi, were present.

Kenny Sheldon reported that items from the J. P. Jackson estate were being auctioned at Potter & Potter. He also mentioned the Masters of Illusion series at Valley Center Casino. The shows feature prominent magicians.

Greg Wauson reminded the members of the close-up competition in February. All slots are filled but members are encouraged to put their name on the back-up list if they are interested in entering in case of a withdrawal.

Malcolm Campbell reported that the awarding of Honor Ring designation to Ring 76 by The I.B.M. should occur within the next month. The application has been approved.

The Mentalism competition involved seven members who put on a good show.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:30 at which time a good part of the group reconvened at Denny's for nourishment and solution of the problems of the world.

..... *malcolm campbell, acting secretary*



**Members in attendance at the January meeting**

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## 2015 MENTALISM NIGHT

Our annual Mentalism Competition covered quite a variety of effects, not the least of which was the appearance, disappearance and re-appearance of contestants! Before the meeting, V.P. of Entertainment, Greg Wauson, had five entries lined up. Richard Usick was under the weather and withdrew. Then, one-by-one, three more threw their wands in the ring – including two (unnamed) who, by their own admission, are not fans of Mentalism. However, that did not appear to have negatively impacted their performances.

Joe Mystic started off with an audience-fooler in which the volunteer was given the choice of any giant card from a deck which the audience could see were all the same. When the chosen card was revealed, it was a different card, but it matched the one Joe set aside as a prediction.

Mago Ruly did a clever number prediction in which the volunteer did a series of mathematical operations on a calculator (what's a Square Root anyway?). The results matched a prediction held by another member of the audience. When the numbers were entered into a phone, President Barajas' phone rang.

Malcolm Campbell followed with a variation of Mr. Wizard. A volunteer conjured up a mental image of a card. That card was located in a deck by the volunteer and set aside without being shown. Malcolm made a phone call to "Madam Zelda" and handed the phone to the volunteer. Madam Zelda correctly identified the card.

Connor Breen did a series of three effects with a packet of cards containing a variety of images. In each effect, he was able to identify the specific card selected by a volunteer.

Then Jeff Marcus accurately determined the information in a telephone book entry selected by a volunteer.

Kenny Shelton's helper drew a variety of shapes on slips of paper which were mixed up and eliminated by the helpers choice. The remaining drawing matched one drawn by Kenny as a prediction.

Cary Shaffner had five volunteers – including our two new guests – each write the answer to a personal question on a billet. Cary wrote his prediction of the answer on another. The answers and predictions were compared at the end.

Impersonating Sherlock Holmes in The Royal Sleight and using assistants to play Dr. Watson and a Duke of dubious character, Bob Meigs told a story over the mixing of cards between Watson and the Duke. A prediction of the resulting composition of the card packet written by "Sherlock" proved to be accurate.

Congratulations to all of the participants for their performances.



**The Mentalism Competition contestants**





There's more here than meets the eye.



Would you like my phone number?



I wouldn't try to fool you.



Maybe if I do the rows first..



I hope this works.



And if I'm elected ...



Give me a hand here.



One, two , three .....



It's here some place



Okay, who took my pipe?





## BOOK REVIEW

### BIG MAGIC FOR LITTLE HANDS

25 Astounding Illusions for Young Magicians

By Joshua Jay

Published by Workman's Publishing

Reviewed by Joel A Moskowitz M D

In addition to being an accomplished and popular magician, Joshua Jay has written some outstanding books on magic including "Magic, The Complete Course" and "The Amazing Book of Cards"

Joshua's father was a magic enthusiast. In a biography, he states that he introduced his son to magic and proclaimed that Joshua would be a great magician. Indeed, the prediction was certain. Would a survey of magicians elicit similar stories of how magic began with them? How often have quarters produced from the ears of six or seven year olds led to a lifelong interest in conjuring?

I, myself, was in the sixth grade when Dell O' Dell performed in our school auditorium. My classmates volunteered me when Dell brought out the guillotine and asked for a student to assist. I say, "I lost my head to magic!"

My nephew knew of my prestidigitation compulsion and asked me to help him with magic. I asked him what the number 793.5 meant to him. I even gave him a clue: "Dewey Decimal System." He failed the quiz. The number represents the location in a library where books about magic can be found. In these days, with electronic instruction, internet search engines, ebooks, etc., young people are prone to avoid books altogether.

Joshua Jay asserts that books are still a great resource for one wanting to learn about magic. Workman's Publishing has demonstrated their concrete thinking by producing Joshua's latest book with the surface area of six or eight iPhones - a really BIG BOOK designed to catch and hold the attention of the reader. Its ninety-nine pages are packed with BIG teaching for everyone - not only children ('little hands') but small thinkers of all ages.

In addition to many, many effects, the book contains definitions, advice and historic information. My observations of some practicing magicians are that they could release their audiences from enduring a boring performance and remove the irritation of having to listen to blue humor if the "magician" would read this book and take the advice that Joshua has written.

Among the effects presented are:

Levitate your sibling (brothers will qualify, not just sisters.)

Vanish your homework.

Do you need to scare the pants off of your parents? (Twist your head and they can 'hear' the bones crunch.)

Teacup vanishes.

Production from a seemingly empty tube.

Stunt which employs 'timing', a grand illusion which miraculously has a partner get into a

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costume previously hung on a clothes hanger.

Chinese appearing egg 'Egg-stro-dinary.

Pandora's box.

Breakaway box - with secret compartments

Rope Escape

Among others, Joshua defines impromptu (spontaneous - after practice of course), misdirection, flash, spectator (actually participants), assistants (best to refer to them and think of them as partners), effects (not "tricks," which dogs do.).

His advice includes:

Conquering stage fright.

Size isn't everything. Children can do magic even if their hands are small. Even magicians with disabilities have become great magicians.

Replying to audiences shout during show. "That is one way to do this effect, but I am not using that method now - even if you do."

He also addresses other uses for magic such as Robert Houdin stopping war with magic in Algeria in 1856, and relates how the first woman star magician, Adelaide Hermann, took the wand after her husband died.

Joshua Jay shares the honors by listing credits for the effects he describes, e.g., Rope Escape was a favorite of Harry Keller and even Houdini.

This is a book that even an experienced adult will find to be of value.

***DOCTOR MOSKOWITZ PRESCRIBES THIS BOOK FOR ALL AGES SEEKING TO PERFECT THEIR CONJURING Rx Rx Rx Rx Rx (5/5)***

### ***Focus on The I.B.M.***

**The Good News is:** The project to digitalize The Linking Ring magazine is finally complete! Members can access **all** issues going back to 1922!

**The Better News is:** All issues are searchable, thanks to the Ask Alexander database. Remember the basic idea of an effect you once saw in the magazine but don't know where to find the details? A search using a few keywords is sure to turn it up.

To get started, log in at [www.magician.org](http://www.magician.org) and select "Access the Linking Ring Collection." If you don't have an Ask Alexander account, set one up (free). You can also link an existing Ask Alexander account with your I.B.M. account. There is also bonus material available to you through Ask Alexander.

### ***FOCUS ON THE LINKING RING***

***Each month, MagicCurrents features an item out of the dozens of informative articles in the current issue of The I.B.M.'s The Linking Ring in which we feel the members might be especially interested.***

You could put together an act to cover any situation from the wealth of effects presented in the various columns of the January issue.

However, we've picked a brief, but fascinating, article by Ian Keable which presents author Charles Dickens' interest in magic and his interactions with magicians of the day. Jane Carlyle, wife of Thomas Carlyle, the contemporary Scottish philosopher, satirical writer, essayist, historian and teacher, is quoted as referring to Dickens as, "...the best conjuror I ever saw."

*Great men make great magicians .... editor*





### *Keep it Simple!*

In a totally unscientific poll, I have concluded that most of us experienced magic for the first time when Uncle Trampus pulled a coin from behind our ear. I came to this conclusion because I actually pull a coin from someone's ear in my strolling act. I begin by asking "What is your first memory of magic?" The vast majority say "Uncle Trampus pulled a coin from behind my ear."

Now, with all of the fabulous and more sophisticated magic out there, why am I pulling coins from peoples' ears? Am I lazy? Am I passing myself off as an expert when I only know the most rudimentary of skills?

Nope. I am keeping it *simple*, but I am also creating a routine that entertains and establishes a connection between me and my audience. Opening with "What was your first experience with magic?" establishes empathy. Most of the audience is now bonded with the performer over a common memory -- a *strong* memory. I go through four false transfers, each more complicated than the last, with jokes and variety along the way (the coin is produced from more places than an ear...). In the final false transfer, the coin vanishes from both hands and reappears from the least expected place. I used many elements Rob Zabrecky so succinctly described in his lecture on the intersection of Theater and Magic: scripting, empathy, building tension (*what is he going to do to top THAT?*), having a solid set of methods to pick from, and letting my audience know I was a skilled and competent magician from a lay point of view -- all with one coin.

I decided to develop this coin routine because of the following experience: It was the Holiday season, eight years ago, and I was hired to entertain a Holiday party of disabled adults who were living in their own apartments with 24/7 assistance. These were adults of all ages; 18 to 80, and they had conditions that ranged from Cerebral Palsy to MS and more. I came prepared to do my best, most sophisticated sleight of hand for them: Cutting the Aces, Poker deals with Faro shuffles, coins across using 4 coins only. After flawlessly performing a

difficult card effect that Tom McCarthy taught me for one lady who was about 24 and confined to a wheelchair, I sat back and waited for her exclamation of wonder and amazement.

She leaned over to me, took my hand in hers and haltingly stated, "I don't get it. Can you pull a coin from my ear?" She looked into my eyes with real interest; She wanted me to amaze her. I did as she asked, and you would have thought I made her levitate on the spot. Her delight was easily >100 on the Whap-o-meter (pronounced: whap-AH-mee-ter; a device based on a puppy's tail to measure joy and exuberance). And that is when I decided that for a lay audience (handicapped or not), keeping it simple was a key principle. Or as Paul Green once told me, "People love the #@\*!?! sponge rabbits!"

.... Jacques Lord

### *Shavings from the Board*



Highlights of the January 26, 2015 meeting of the Ring 76 Board of Directors:

**Financial Condition** - The Treasurer's report indicated that the Ring will have a budget shortfall this year, primarily due to having to pay for meeting space since we left Jack's Place.

The Board discussed this situation, focusing on both austerity measures and revenue-generating strategies. The results will be presented to the membership.

**Library** - Library materials will not be available at the February meeting in order to avoid distraction from the contest.

**Close Up Contest Judging** - Close up judging procedures were discussed. The conclusions of the discussion were as follows:

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(Continued from page 8)

Close Up Contest judges will be two Magicians and two Lay. The Board identified four potential judges plus one alternate to be contacted for the February contest.

Each judge will score the categories on a 1 to 10 scale, without normalization.

The judges will score three categories: Technical Skill (30%), Entertainment Value/Showmanship (50%), Appearance and Demeanor (20%).

The weighting of member votes with respect to judges' scores is currently fixed at 40/60.

**Member Behavior** - Complaints concerning the behavior of one of the Mentalism contestants during his performance at the January meeting were addressed.

The next meeting of the Ring 76 Board of Directors will be held at the home of Bob Meigs. Any member is welcome to attend but please contact Bob Meigs at [carshows@sbcglobal.net](mailto:carshows@sbcglobal.net) so that space and food can be planned.



### THE CURRENT BOARD OF DIRECTORS

L to R: Member at Large/Librarian Kenny Shelton, VP Membership James Thayer, Member at Large Joe Mystic, Treasurer Bob Meigs, President Sal Barajas, Secretary Jacques Lord, Member at Large/Magicurrents Editor Malcolm Campbell, VP Entertainment Greg Wauson, Sergeant-at-Arms Jeff Sargent

## Wanderful Routine

By Himitsu Magic

### A product review by Malcolm Campbell

This impressive *wand* routine involves the production, multiplication, disappearance and color-changing of wooden wands.

The successful performance of the routine is part gimmick and part skill. If I had to put numbers on it, I'd say 20% gimmick and 80% skill. I would not rate the required skill level particularly high but a smooth performance requires successfully blending a long series of moves.

The effect comes with all of the hardware necessary — including the gimmicks — plus, by magic standards, a fairly well-done instructional DVD. The DVD is silent with all of the instruction done by example rather than verbally. For me at least, that is much preferred.

On the DVD, each move is shown from the audience's perspective, then shown again from several other angles so that you can see the handling. With this approach, you can learn and perfect the initial moves and then continue to build the routine.

The gimmicks and some moves will not pass close inspection, so the routine is definitely not for close up and iffy for parlor. It is, however, an eye-catching stage routine.

At around \$70.00, it's worth considering adding Wanderful to your stage effects.

A full performance can be seen on You Tube at [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NFDrkNdHm\\_g](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NFDrkNdHm_g).





## February Close-Up Competition Rules

It is time for the Ring 76 Annual Close-up Competition at our regular meeting on February 9th. Competitors will have up to 10 minutes to show-off their magical skills. The following rules will be strictly enforced:

### **Time Limit:**

10 minutes with a 1-Minute Warning. Once VP of Entertainment Greg Wauson has called “Time!,” the contestants must stop completely.

If a contestant continues to perform after “Time!” has been called, the judges will be instructed to score that contestant with a “0”.

### **Maximum Number of Contestants:**

Due to time constraints, our competition can only allow for “8” contestants total.

### **Table Set-Up & Contest Format:**

There will be 4 separate tables, each with an official judge. The contestant will have an opportunity to perform for each table/judge once during the course of the event. This means that contestants will be performing their act 4 times. With 8 contestants and only 4 tables available, contestants will be broken up into 2 groups of 4. The two groups will alternate performing every 10 minutes. Example: Group A will perform for the first 8 minutes after which Group B will perform the next 10 minutes, followed by Group A and so on. This alternating of time will allow each contestant an 8 Minute reset period between performances.

### **Scoring:**

Each contestant’s performance score will be determined by a combination of both a judges’ score and member votes. Judges will score each of the following categories on a scale of 0 to 10.

- Technical Skill
- Entertainment Value/Showmanship
- Appearance and Demeanor

Total Judges’ Score for each contestant will be the sum of the scores assigned by each of the four judges. This will count as 60% of the contestant’s final score.

Each member seated at the tables will get to vote once for his or her favorite contestant. Member votes count for 40% of the final score.

To sign up please contact Greg Wauson at [gw83@ring76.com](mailto:gw83@ring76.com)

Greg Wauson  
1<sup>st</sup> Vice President of Entertainment



**Last Year’s Close-Up Contest**



## MICHAEL CARBONARO and "CARBONARO EFFECT"

A review by Jeff Marcus

If you haven't seen the TV show "Carbonaro Effect", (Thursdays at 10:00 pm on Tru TV with repeats on other cable channels) you're missing a really cool TV show that features magic used in a very covert way. The show's theme is similar to "Candid Camera" with magic used to accomplish the "gag" on the unsuspecting "mark".

The magic features Michael Carbonaro, a very clever magician/actor who started on the Tonight Show with Jay Leno as "The Magic Clerk." In the segment, Michael played the role of a clerk in some sort of a store or business, often a 7/11 type of establishment. When a customer comes up to the counter, weird things begin to happen. This feature of the show became so popular that Tru TV picked it up as a regular program.

Typical of the content of the show is the "Insta-Chick" routine. The customer notices a very professional display of plastic Easter-type eggs that are labeled "Insta-Chick". Carbonaro offers to demonstrate how cool they are by opening up an egg which contains a little plastic chicken. He puts it in a Styrofoam cup, adds a little water, then, with perfect sleight-of-hand, dumps out a real live baby chick! The look of amazement on the mark's face is often hilarious.

Michael doesn't react as if anything weird or unusual happened. He plays it off like it's just normal or that there's a logical explanation for it. For instance when the mark questions how the chick comes to life, he explains that when you get it in the egg, it's just dehydrated. (of course??) He does dozens – if not hundreds -- of similar gags, all with a straight face. I highly suggest checking the show out.

A few weeks ago, Rich Robertson, Greg Wauson and I went up to the Magic Castle to hear a talk by Michael Carbonaro and David Regal (one of his many consultants and, I believe, credited as

Magic Producer). It was a VERY enlightening and entertaining evening. They showed many clips from the show, explained how they accomplished some of the magic gags and talked about producing the show. I'm not going to tip methods here but will mention a few of the production issues.

They pointed out that there are some major challenges in setting up and pulling off a gag to work for the show:

1. They have to get the gag on camera without any blocking of the shot so the audience at home sees the gag clearly. (Michael is wearing an invisible earpiece so the director can tell him if he needs to move or get the mark to move)
2. They have to shoot the gag in such a way that it doesn't expose the method. (They shoot each gag with 7 hidden cameras at different angles.)
3. They need to get a good on-camera reaction from the mark.
4. After they let the mark in on the gag, they must get him or her to be willing to sign a release in order to broadcast their likeness. (They pay to get them to sign).

They also explained why they shoot the show in Georgia, rather than L.A. where they live. It was interesting to find out that the state of Georgia REALLY wants shows produced there and so they offer a 30% "kickback" to any productions shot there. In the case of their show, (which has a relatively small budget for a series) they get a 1.2 million kickback which pays for the entire crew's travel, hotels and food and they still come out way ahead of shooting anywhere else!

I was amazed at how fast Michael could think ahead. He is the Executive Producer and is very involved with all phases of the show's production including the editing. I should point out that they do not use editing for "camera magic," only for time constraints and to use the best angle for the audience to clearly see what's happening. In other words, the TV audience sees what the mark sees (unlike some other TV freaky magic shows in-

*(Continued on page 12)*

cluding one with names I won't mention, but their initials are C.A. and M.F.)

One example of how Michael is thinking ahead was where he (wrongly) mentioned that a male dog would be spayed (instead of neutered). He was corrected by the mark (who was bent over petting a dog) and realized he needed to say it correctly so they could edit out the wrong word later. He said the phrase again correctly but then realized that the mark had already stood up and when they edited it (later) there would be a "jump cut" (one moment the mark is bent over and then a second later is standing, which would look like an edit) so Michael immediately "accidently" knocked something off the counter and asked the mark to please pick it up for him.

When she bent over to get it, he said the neuter phrase again so when they edited it, the mark would be in the correct position (bent over) when he said it correctly. Having been in the broadcasting business where I dealt with many "jump cuts", I was amazed that he could think that far ahead to make it easier for editing much later.

Again, it was a really fun and hilarious evening. If you haven't seen it, do check it out.

..... *jeff marcus*



Used with permission of Dan Piraro.

My apologies for any omissions in the minutes of the January meeting. It was realized too late that the Secretary was ill and not in attendance, which required the information on the meeting's activities to be assembled after the fact.

.... *editor*





## NOTES AND REMINDERS

Have magic to sell, stage equipment to rent? Looking for something to buy or rent? Need a ride or have room for a passenger to an out of town event such as the Magic Castle?

Have a special skill another member might use? Need a temporary assistant?

**Advertise it at no cost to Ring 76 members in MagiCurrents**

Anything related to magic is acceptable.

Contact the Editor at [editor@Ring76.com](mailto:editor@Ring76.com)

### Note from the Webmaster:

If the security in your web browser is set to not allow redirection or to warn you if the site attempts to redirect, the links on the Ring76.com homepage will not be valid. You can either reset that option in your browser or click “allow” to get to the proper page with valid links.

.... webmaster

The publication date of each issue of MagiCurrents is the Thursday 10 days before the monthly meeting. Submissions from officers, reporters and other members are due the Wednesday before the publication date. If you want *your* newsletter on time, please be prompt!!



... editor

**Remember**, we are looking for product reviews. It doesn't matter if you liked what you paid for or not, we want your opinion for the benefit of the rest of the members. If you're not a writer, we can arrange a short sit-down to gather the facts and write the review.

**Thanks to all who contributed to this issue of MagiCurrents!**

..... editor